

# Profiles in Education:

A Look at Middle Grades in Montana



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## Greetings

Dear Friends,

This publication, *Profiles in Education: A Look at Middle Grades in Montana*, will introduce you to some of Montana's quality middle grades programs. There are many great examples of strategies used to increase the academic achievement of their students, while also providing an enriching and positive learning environment for everyone.

A quality middle school program will help students adapt to the additional academic and social pressures of their early teen years and provide a bridge to the challenges they will face in a rigorous academic high school program. It is important that our middle school students are ready for the challenges they will face as citizens in the 21st century. Their success after high school can be significantly impacted by the middle school years.

These years can be hard for all adolescents and the people who care for them. It is trying not only due to the emotional and physical changes they are going through, but it is also a critical time in students' education as the subject matter becomes increasingly difficult. This is why it is important to have someone in my office who is dedicated to this student population.

In 2007, the Montana Legislature appropriated funding to the Office of Public Instruction to provide for curriculum specialists to develop resources for teachers and administrators based on research-proved best practices in curriculum and classroom instruction, assist with the delivery of professional development, facilitate the revision of the state content and performance standards on the cycle adopted by the Board of Public Education, and assist with the development of model curriculum and assessment tools to measure student progress toward the standards.

I hope you find the publication useful in your school and community. Thank you for all you do for Montana's students.



--Linda McCulloch  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction





## An Eye on the Past...

The early 1970s were a dramatic time in Montana's education history.

At the 1972 Constitutional Convention, members gathered together and crafted an article designed to ensure that all Montanans would learn about the history and culture of the eight tribes within its boundaries. This provision was the first of its kind in state law.

In 1974, the Montana Legislature passed a school funding bill which provided for increased funding for seventh and eighth grade students in schools meeting the standards of accredited middle schools as established by the Montana State Department of Public Instruction. (Layman) This piece of the funding bill came as the result of a movement among educators to provide for a different way to help young adolescents transition from elementary to high school.

Nationally, at the time, the discussion in the education field centered on how to best help students who were leaving the comfort of the K-6 environment and heading for the brand new world of junior high school. Educators began noticing that this transition, from sixth to seventh grade and then from eighth to ninth grade, was increasingly presenting social, emotional, and educational concerns. Montana's 1974 school funding bill enabled the state's educators to provide an alternative to junior high school, if desired by a community, for its children.

Known as Chapter 352, Section 75-6601.1 of the Revised Codes of Montana 1974, the rule reads, "A middle school is a school comprising the work of grades four through eight or any combination thereof that has been accredited as a middle school under the provisions of 75-7502." And with that, it was possible for the middle school to begin operation in the state. Educators had succeeded in their efforts to "develop a middle school which would act as a transitional bridge from the elementary school to the high school and would meet the various social, emotional, physical, and psychological needs of students during the difficult period of adolescence." (Layman)



## National Trends in Middle Level Education

These are exciting times because so much is happening in the field of middle level education! Leading the charge is the National Middle School Association (NMSA). This organization is involved in every facet of the field. From research, professional development, advocacy, communication, and reaching out to middle grade educators worldwide, NMSA is the best resource for support and information.

This year the NMSA saw its advocacy work gain momentum with bills introduced in both houses of Congress for the Success in the Middle Act. This legislation seeks to provide significant funding focused on grades five through eight for school improvement, professional development, support for students, and the generation, dissemination, and application of research needed to identify and implement effective practices that lead to continual student learning and high academic achievement. In addition, NMSA is advancing efforts to collaborate with other education advocacy organizations to strengthen the need for rigorous educational programming at the middle grade level. The 58 affiliate state and international associations play an important role in advancing quality education at the middle level (NMSA 2007 Annual Report).

Other national trends include project based learning, collaborative leadership, technology, and 21st century learning goals. Project based learning has become increasingly important in schools as the business community continues to lament that students are not ready for the world of work where collaborating as a team is the hallmark of the workplace. Particularly at the middle school level, teachers are using this method to develop in students the ability to think and work as a team to achieve the desired outcome.

Collaborative leadership has led to true teaming and interdisciplinary teaching. A team, or teams, of teachers for middle school students has long been a characteristic of middle school philosophy. More recently, however, this collaborative leadership among administrators and faculty has seen the expansion of the idea to include a more de-

termined focus on true collaboration between the team members and the students, resulting in a terrific learning partnership.

There is tremendous concern nationally that our students are not ready for the global economy they will be facing when they graduate from school. To that end, technology in schools and 21st century learning goals and expectations have gained much attention recently. Current trends indicate a move to capitalize on our students' knowledge of the technology that is part of their world daily and to put that knowledge to work in the classroom. In this way, learning becomes interesting and exciting to our young adolescents. In regard to 21st century learning goals, the trend at present is toward school reform, or reworking the school environment and curriculum so that both are more conducive to critical thinking and problem solving. The belief here is that these types of changes will lead to better achievement and performance, both for college-bound students and students ready to enter the workplace.

## So What's Happening in Montana?

The 2007 Montana Legislature approved the funding for six curriculum specialists. One of these positions was a middle school and at-risk specialist. Our state is one of few that have a curriculum person dedicated specifically to middle level education. The purpose of the specialist in this field is to promote the middle school philosophy, develop a network of support for the middle level community, maintain a Web space for dissemination of current research, trends, and news pertinent to middle school, cultivate meaningful professional development specifically geared to this field, and, most importantly, to be of service to middle school educators across the state.

Montana is a unique state, particularly in the area of education. Within the 433 school districts serving our young adolescent students, the school settings vary widely. There are AA districts with over 15,000 students to one-room schoolhouses with five students and one teacher! And yet, our middle school students perform highly compared to their peers nationally. Montana has some of the best education programs and faculty in the country and leads the way nationally in its Indian Education for All curriculum. In

2008, Montana saw three of its middle school teachers win national awards! Sally Broughton, Monforton School, received the Spirit of Service award from the Corporation for National and Community Service; and Tim Joern, Whitefish Middle School, along with Anne Keith, Chief Joseph Middle School, received the Presidential Math and Science award.

Career and technical education, service learning programs, and school improvement and reform are currently being implemented statewide. Middle schools play an important role in these programs as our students make the transition to high school and beyond. National trends in these areas indicate a need for well prepared young adults who have a vision for their future. Montana is committed to helping its middle school students realize their potential.

## Focus on the Present...

Today middle grades students in Montana are educated through a variety of settings: from the K-8 rural schools; different combinations of middle grades buildings; junior high schools; to the AA districts with hundreds of students in a 6th grade to 8th grade building. Of the 142,251 public school students in the state, 32,832 of them were enrolled in 6th through 8th grades.

Within the following pages, you will visit many of the outstanding middle grades schools in our state. We invite you to examine the truly terrific programs, projects, students, and staff members working hard to provide and participate in an education that will prepare our students for high school, college, and the world of work.

*So come, meet some of Montana's middle grades communities...*

### Beaverhead County

Dillon Middle School  
District: Dillon Elementary  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 237

### Big Horn County

Northern Cheyenne Tribal School  
Grades Served 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment 26 (total 1-8)

### Broadwater County

Townsend 7-8  
District: Townsend K – 12 Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 117

### Carbon County

Bridger 7-8  
District: Bridger K – 12 Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 26

Joliet 7-8  
District: Joliet Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 75

Roosevelt Middle School  
District: Red Lodge Public Schools  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 110

Victor Middle School  
District: Victor K-12 Schools  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 69

### Cascade County

Belt 7-8  
District: Belt Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 56

East Middle School  
District: Great Falls Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 769

North Middle School  
District: Great Falls Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 757

## Custer County

Washington Middle School  
District: Miles City Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 304

## Dawson County

Washington Middle School  
District: Glendive Public Schools  
Grades Served: 5-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 351

## Deer Lodge County

Fred Moodry Middle School  
District: Anaconda Public Schools  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 291

## Flathead County

Kalispell Middle School  
District: Kalispell Public Schools  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 316

Kila 7-8  
District: Kila Elementary  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 41

Marion Middle School  
District: Marion Elementary  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 21

Whitefish Middle School  
District: Whitefish Public Schools  
Grades Served: 5-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 519

## Gallatin County

Anderson School  
District: Anderson Elementary  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 43

Chief Joseph Middle School  
District: Bozeman Public Schools  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 532

Sacajawea Middle School  
District: Bozeman Public Schools  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 657

Gallatin Gateway 7-8  
District: Gallatin Gateway Elementary  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 31

## Glacier County

Browning Middle School  
District: Browning Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 246

## Hill County

Box Elder 7-8  
District: Box Elder Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 57

Havre Middle School  
District: Havre Public Schools  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 399

Rocky Boy Jr. High  
District: Rocky Boy Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 90

## Jefferson County

Montana City Middle School  
District: Montana City Elementary  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 123

## Lake County

Charlo Middle School  
District: Charlo Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 69

Ronan Middle School  
District: Ronan Public Schools  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 278

## Lewis and Clark County

East Valley Middle School  
District: East Helena Elementary  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 365

Helena Middle School  
District: Helena Public Schools  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 719

### Liberty County

Chester-Joplin-Iverness Jr. High  
District: Cheste  
Joplin-Iverness Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 40

### Lincoln County

Eureka Middle School  
District: Eureka Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 123

### Missoula County

C S Porter Middle School  
District: Missoula County Public Schools  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 513

Lolo Middle School  
District: Lolo Elementary  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 185

### Musselshell County

Melstone 7-8  
District: Melstone Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 15

Roundup Jr. High School  
District: Roundup Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 88

### Park County

Pine Creek 7-8  
District: Pine Creek Elementary  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 7

### Phillips County

Malta Jr. High School  
District: Malta K – 12 Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment 105

### Powell County

E F Duvall Jr. High  
District: Deer Lodge Elementary  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 140

### Ravalli County

Corvallis Middle School  
District: Corvallis K – 12 Schools  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 249+

Hamilton Middle School  
District: Hamilton K – 12 Schools  
Grades Served 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 384

Stevensville Jr. High School  
District: Stevensville Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 143

Victor Middle School  
District: Victor K-12 Schools  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 69

### Roosevelt County

Poplar Middle School  
District: Poplar Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 157

### Sanders County

Thompson Falls Jr. High School  
District: Thompson Falls Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 75

### Silver Bow County

East Middle School  
District: Butte Public Schools  
Grades Served: 7-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 731

### Stillwater County

Columbus Middle School  
District: Columbus Public Schools  
Grades Served: 6-8  
06-07 Enrollment: 152

## Yellowstone County

### Lewis & Clark Middle School

District: Billings Public Schools

Grades Served: 7-8

06-07 Enrollment: 551

### Will James Middle School

District: Billings Public Schools

Grades Served: 7-8

06-07 Enrollment: 544

### Canyon Creek 7-8

District: Canyon Creek Elementary

Grades Served: 7-8

06-07 Enrollment: 41

### Huntley Project Jr. High School

District: Huntley Project K – 12 Schools

Grades Served: 7-8

06-07 Enrollment: 108

### Laurel Middle School

District: Laurel Public Schools

Grades Served: 5-8

06-07 Enrollment: 423

### Lockwood Middle School

District: Lockwood Elementary

Grades Served: 6-8

06-07 Enrollment: 368





# Profiles in Education:

A Look at Middle Grades in Montana

## Beaverhead County

### Dillon Middle School

“Teaching Effectively, Learning Successfully”

At Dillon Middle School, we believe that a positive attitude demonstrated through behavior is at the heart of successful learning. We apply Montana Behavior Initiative (MBI) principles and practices by actively teaching behavior expectations to our students. Our students thrive in a safe, orderly environment where their good character is celebrated at Rewards Days throughout the school year.

To improve student academic success, we use iAnalyze to closely monitor CRT data. We’re identifying specific content for reteaching and students in need of additional instructional support.

DMS students enthusiastically participate in multiple school sponsored activities. We nurture and develop their talents through athletics, music, clubs, and student government. Our students interact as responsible community members through mentoring, recycling, neighborhood clean-up, and service to community groups.



## Big Horn County

### Northern Cheyenne Tribal School

At Northern Cheyenne Tribal School we provide an environment where diversity and culture are celebrated. This is evident in our Middle School (MS) grades where we develop the whole child—mind, body, and spirit. We support courageous endeavors in academics, fine arts, and athletics. Our MS students have made huge strides toward being successful academically. Many of our MS students are competitors in regional and national art shows/competitions as well as superb athletes who demonstrate the values of good sportsmanship on and off the court. MS students make up the majority of the American Indian Business Leaders (AIBL) Chapter which was recognized this year with the Junior Chapter Award. This group concentrates on beading pouches with Native American patterns for recovery center medallions.



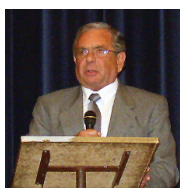
## Broadwater County

### Townsend 7-8

Townsend Middle School is a small school of approximately 190 students in Broadwater County. TMS is proud of the wide variety of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities offered to students. One of the highlights of the academic year is the annual Holocaust unit in which eighth grade students participate each spring. Initially, they learn some World War II background in their social studies classes. Then, using *The Diary of Anne Frank* as a springboard, students examine many issues regarding diversity and tolerance. Studying modern hate crimes and discussing state or local issues is an important component of the tolerance teachings. After reading *The Diary*, students extend their literature experience by doing projects for other Holocaust stories and by writing poetry. In math class, they do some graphing with Holocaust statistics, while in science they study nutrition in an attempt to comprehend the hardships of severe dietary restrictions. Carefully selected video presentations enhance their understanding of the subject. Students also take part in a two-day sculpting activity where they form clay objects reflective of their feelings about intolerance and hate, either modern or with regard to the Holocaust. Most years, money permitting, the unit culminates with a Holocaust remembrance evening. At this event, high school drama students may present a Holocaust play or there may be a Holocaust survivor who speaks. Following that, community members and other students can view the display of Holocaust posters from the Simon Wiesenthal Museum.



A collection of posters donated to TMS by Steve Dold of Helena.



George Fodor from San Antonio, Texas, a survivor of the Theresienstadt camp near Prague.



## Carbon County

### Bridger 7-8

The Bridger Middle School is looking past the classroom walls with a constructivist approach to learning.

- We are working with classrooms around the world through ePals. We have had correspondence with Chili, Bangladesh, Australia, and Italy. We are learning more about their cultures and learning how much we are alike.
- Students participate in an annual Science Fair and students enter the Billings Clinic Science Bowl, (they race a fuel cell car).
- Our cross-curricular projects promote technology in daily learning, in an authentic manner. Students complete personalized budgets designed from career choices determined from skill and ability assessments.
- We are working with the education specialist through the Beartooth Nature Center, emphasizing the "Inquiry Method" and "real-life" science. The specialist comes into science classes and has students observe or create real life situations that connect the school curriculum to the local environment. The students compile data and perform experiments.

We are constantly growing, learning, and expanding our boundaries!



## Carbon County

### Joliet 7-8

Home of the J-Hawks

Talents in Action.

Academic excellence is the name of the game when JMS hosts its annual Talents in Action academic contest. JMS students and staff invite students from area schools

to participate in a full day of academic contests and fun. Nearly 300 students compete in academic contests that range from speaking and art events, to creative writing, written tests and team quiz events. Besides the last day of school, it is the best day of the year!

MBI

- JMS students are **S\*T\*A\*R\*S**—
- Safe and welcoming
- Team players
- Accountable
- Respectful and responsible
- Spirited

As part of the MBI program, Joliet students have begun to take ownership over the school environment. Our MBI youth team has helped to make our school a positive place to learn. In addition to making a positive change at school, they have participated in a variety of learn and serve activities that benefit our school, community and world.



## Carbon County

### Roosevelt 7-8

At Roosevelt Middle School we are “Building a Foundation for Life”. We emphasize the pillars of Respect, Integrity, Honesty, and Courage as it relates to our vision statement. We strive to provide our students with the best atmosphere for learning. As a staff we aim to give our students the best opportunity for success in academics, athletics, and the fine arts so they may become positive influences and productive citizens in our society. We feel that every child has the opportunity to learn and improve both in academics and extracurricular activities.

As a middle school we utilize the practice of TEAM (Together, Everyone, Achieves, More). Everyday of the week we meet in teams working on solving problems, developing character, discussing issues that affect us, among others. It is a great way for students to work with their team teachers and their peers in a smaller educational setting. We offer an exploratory schedule that offers personal skills, Spanish, Agriculture Education, and Industrial Arts. Our students also take place in a music/drama program that emphasizes acting, singing, and dancing. We have implemented a careers’ program that is designed at showing students various job descriptions as they enter the career field both in high school and college. We culminate the careers’ program with a career fair, which brings in a variety of local occupations.

Roosevelt Middle School is a terrific venue for education and our staff and students work hard to promote our academic successes and achievements.



## Cascade County

### Belt 7-8

Hooked on Fishing (HOF) is a program modeled after a national Hooked on Fishing – Not on Drugs® program developed by the Future Fisherman Foundation. The goals of the HOF program include introducing students, teachers, and parents to the fish and aquatic resources of Montana, and to promote fishing and outdoor recreation.

Students take part in a variety of activities, both inside and outside the classroom. The lessons are designed to cover a variety of subjects and are aligned to Montana's State Standards. In addition to the classroom activities, students take part in open water fishing and ice fishing. A few of the other activities are fish dissection, water distribution, lure making, fish identification and fish printing.

HOF's skilled educators promote water safety and respect for the environment. The curriculum also encourages students to engage in healthy activities in which they can participate throughout their lifetime.



## Cascade County

### East Middle School

East Middle School in Great Falls, Montana, just completed our exploratory experiences, titled Ram Picks on Friday, May 2. Students selected from over 50 opportunities offered by staff and community members, ranging from soccer, bowling, mini-golf, golf, tennis, Japanese experience, fishing in Montana, archery, scrapbooking and stamping, a tour of Malmstrom Air Force Base, cooking, trips to two of our local fitness clubs, model cars, Swiss style chess tournament, to an exciting day in the great outdoors while learning to ride ATVs and dirt bikes outside of Cascade, and many more! A great time was had by all; students, staff, PTA officers, and volunteers.



## Cascade County

### North Middle School

#### About Our School

Set in the urban area of Great Falls, Mt., North Middle School houses 742 students, 62 teachers and 18 additional full time staff. Our school celebrated the completion of CRT testing this year with a school wide math and science celebration day honoring pi (3.14159). Our middle school teams planned activities focusing on pi throughout the school day. Those activities included creating circle graphs, beading bracelets using different colors to represent various numbers, measuring the circumference of one's head and then dividing by 3.14 to get one's hat size, writing pi poems, singing and writing pi day songs, and creating (and eating!) pie. Many classes had pi trivia contests. Prizes included mini fruit pies and chocolate cream pies. Some teams enjoyed pizza pie in their team area at lunch or pie for dessert. Teachers showed their enthusiasm by singing pi day songs and telling a pi joke or two. Appropriately enough, on 3/14 at 1:59 p.m. (3.14159), we honored pi with a moment of silence announced over our PA system. Everyone enjoyed the day that marked real-life applications of why math is important, along with the benefits pi brings our world!



## Custer County

### Washington Middle School

#### Philosophy and Goals

We believe that Washington Middle School is unique in its role of helping the early adolescent student make a successful transition between the elementary school and high school setting. We recognize that it is our responsibility to establish a positive, safe school environment and a comprehensive curriculum that will challenge our students to master the fundamentals of academics, technology, and vocational education. Students will increase their appreciation for the fine arts and humanities.

Our school motto is: TOMORROW IS IN OUR HANDS TODAY!



## Dawson County

### Washington Middle School

Located along the banks of the Yellowstone River in Glendive, Washington Middle School has 340 students in grades 5-8. The school provides many meaningful opportunities for these students to learn and grow. Many clubs, organizations, sports, academic competitions, and tutoring possibilities are available for students.

The Six Pillars of Character: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship are promoted at WMS. Students have participated in fund raising activities to aid the flood victims of the Katrina hurricane and in Vernonia, Oregon, showing their caring and citizenship. Clubs have helped with many causes in the community.

Washington Middle School's students have met AYP the past two years. The faculty and staff work hard to see students be successful as they can be.



## Deer Lodge County

### Fred Moodry Middle School

Nurturing, mentoring and cultivating citizens of the world are key missions for the administration and staff of Fred Moodry Middle School in Anaconda, Montana. Students begin their day with 20 minutes in advisory Class where activities and daily announcements set a positive tone for the school day. Teachers are available for the after school tutoring program. Motivational programs such as CAST (Caught Acting Super Terrific) and BUG (Bringing Up Grades) reward students for good behavior and academic excellence throughout the year. Moodry Mentors, a student mentoring group, helps new students and incoming 6th graders make comfortable adjustments to Middle school Life. Our Student Council and Builders Club are active groups with community outreach programs. Sports programs abound and build our future Anaconda Copperheads athletically. FMMS students distinguish themselves yearly in the Academic, Math and Science Olympiads and are usually notably represented in the Science Fair, and Spelling and Geography Bees. Fred Moodry Middle School provides an active, academic environment that is appreciative of the early adolescent.





## Flathead County

### Kalispell Middle School

Kalispell Middle School is a three-year educational facility offering a comprehensive program for students Grades 6-7-8. The mission of Kalispell Middle School is to produce contributing members of America's diverse society. We stimulate intellectual curiosity within a school environment where students feel a sense of safety, community and ownership. We promote pride in individual achievement and help students meet their potential by instilling the value of accomplishment based on good behavior, work and effort.

Kalispell Middle School has a population of 935 city of Kalispell students Grades 6-7-8. We are a middle school with teaming at each grade level and an advisory or Home Base period each day. Each team at each grade level has a period of team planning set aside for planning of cross-curricular work; team time for meeting with parents and students; for planning of test scheduling; for planning homework load; for scheduling weekly agenda; for planning awards assemblies. Each team has the flexibility to block core classes to accommodate for labs, field trips, projects.

KMS has three core teams of four educators at Grade 6 and each core team teaches the subjects of reading, communication arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. Grade 6 students receive health enhancement each day. Grade 6 students have six core periods for instruction with one period of encore or elective classes. Students may select a full year of music, selecting either orchestra, choir or instrumental band for their one encore period. If the student does not select the music field as an encore then they are in our encore wheel for Grade 6. In the wheel the student takes a nine weeks rotation of Art, Family and Consumer Science, Keyboarding, Technology Education (a mixture of woods, metals and technology education).

Grades 7 and 8 have three teams each grade level. Those core teams consist five educators on each team teaching a communication arts, mathematics (three levels), social studies, and science or health enhancement. Students at the Grade 7 and 8 level then have two encore or elective periods broken into trimester lengths with each encore choice being 12 weeks long. The encore choices are in seven areas or fields of emphasis: Art (four classes to choose from in art); As the World Turns (four classes to choose from consisting of current events, valley history, American Indian, world cultures and customs); Family and Consumer Science (four classes in this area to select from); Industrial Technology (four classes to select from in this field); Information Technology (four classes to select from in this encore); World Languages (student may select German, French, Spanish). The student may elect to take a year-long Music of band, choir, or orchestra to fill one of the two encore periods.

Before a student moves from KMS to one of our two high schools the student has to have taken an encore class from each of the six areas of emphasis so the student has sampled all areas to be able to make better choices at the high school level where the schools have a career track emphasis.



## Flathead County

### Kila 7-8

Kila School is located in Flathead County. Each year Kila 8th graders end the year with a trip to the Emerald City, also known as Seattle, Washington. Originally this trip was a part of Kila School's Gear Up program (early college awareness program). All year long students and their parents participate in fundraising activities to cover the expenses of the trip. Students ride the Amtrak train to and from Seattle accompanied by staff and parent chaperones. While in Seattle, they make two college visits to the Seattle School of Art and the University of Washington. Other activities include a Seattle harbor tour, a visit to the famous Pike's Place Market, and if the team is in town, a Mariner baseball game. Transportation around town is by transit bus using bus passes and the Seattle monorail. Everyone arrives home exhausted, but overflowing with tales of their "big city" adventures!



## Flathead County

### Marion Middle School

Marion Middle School serves thirty-six students in Marion, a small rural community twenty-five miles west of Kalispell. Although our school may be small in stature, we pride ourselves in having wonderful, bright students and being a cornerstone of the community. Each grade level participates in various functions throughout year that allows them to apply their classroom knowledge in real-world situations. The sixth graders attend a three-day spring camp each year where they "take their learning to the woods." The seventh graders manage an annual elementary school track meet that includes other schools from the surrounding area. The eighth graders may be the busiest of all, for they spend the majority of the year fundraising for their annual Montana class trip. Each eighth grader is required to raise 80% of the funds to pay for their way. This five day trip takes the students exploring and performing field work all across the state. Finally, each grade gets to show off their smarts against one another during Catapult Week, the school's friendly competition where the students are the engineers, water balloons the projectiles, and their peers the targets!



*Clay Davis prepares to load the catapult with another water balloon!*

## Flathead County

### Whitefish Middle School

Whitefish Middle School, located in Whitefish, Montana, is home to 550 students in grades 5-8. A staff of 60 works with students in a new building designed specifically to accommodate the learning and social needs of middle school students

WMS (Whitefish Middle School) is one of 5 pilot schools that originated the Montana Behavioral Initiative. Students are quite familiar with Project PRIDE: Personal Responsibility Is a Daily Expectation, part of the Montana Behavioral Initiative. They know the WMS staff is proud of them, and counts on them to live up to WMS standards. The staff teaches and reinforces expected behaviors on a regular basis throughout the year. This teaching approach to choosing great behavior, gives WMS students multiple opportunities to improve and succeed.

WMS academics are driven by the unique needs of middle school students: best teaching practices, research-based instructional materials, rigorous curriculum and Assessment for Learning are integral aspects of the WMS program. The “pod design” of the building lends itself to multiple middle school uses. Students can often be found studying together in the pods, working with “hands-on” projects, practicing their oral foreign language studies, CPR or role-playing, cooking in pod kitchens for curriculum oriented strategies, or working with staff one-on-one. The pod design has proven to be a valuable component in supporting staff desire to offer best practice instructional strategies for this age group. Students are challenged to participate in their education. They learn how to assume responsibility for their own learning, as well as their social and academic choices. They also know they will find a safe place, a “family” atmosphere, while they learn at Whitefish Middle School.

Programs such as Peer Mediation, Second Step Conflict Resolution and Student Council, teach WMS students how to make healthy and safe choices. Students are encouraged to participate in WMS clubs and activities, including the popular WMS intramural program. Opportunities

abound to experience education outside the classroom, including annual science trips to Glacier Park’s Big Creek Environmental Center. The 8th grade Montana History Trip, now in its 40th year, offers students a tremendous educational experience, as students gain a deeper appreciation for the beauty and history of Montana. The 4 day History Trip serves, as well, as an incentive and reward for the excellent citizenship and academic choices students have made throughout their last year at Whitefish Middle School.

Lunchtime is about more than eating at WMS. The lunch program teaches students an awareness of choosing healthy food by offering students a wide variety of healthy meals and snacks, as well as a salad bar. Students have recess before lunch, as this serves to improve behavior and increase focus. Community service factors in the lunch program, as all classes rotate and take responsibility for the lunch cleanup. Students experience leadership and service roles by wiping down tables, sweeping the floor and cleaning the microwave ovens. They recycle brown paper bags, and plastic bottles. Area horses benefit from partially consumed food. Unopened food containers are taken to the local Food Bank.

Whitefish Middle School strives to work in partnership with students, staff, families and community members to support middle school students in their academic and personal growth. Students at WMS are taught that placing a high value on academic achievement, integrity and taking personal responsibility is instrumental in choosing a successful life. To that end, all students and staff begin the day with this announcement: “Make it a great day...the choice is yours!”





## Gallatin County

### Anderson School

#### Overview of EcoSite Research at the Anderson School

Beginning during the fall of 2007, 7th and 8th grade students at the Anderson School began working on a field-based research project that examines how soil CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations, soil moisture, soil temperature, and snow depth vary through time and between four landscapes: a forest, wetland, meadow, and riparian area. The project mirrors that of graduate student Vince Pacific, a Big Sky Institute GK-12 Fellow from Montana State University.

The ecosites are located adjacent to the Anderson School. Access to the field site has been granted by the land-owners, as well as permission to install instruments for educational purposes. Field supplies were graciously donated by the Watershed Hydrology Lab at Montana State University, as well as permission to use the necessary equipment. The students went out in groups of 6 four times each week from September through March and collected data from all ecosites each week.

The students collected the following data at 4 locations within each ecosite:

- Soil CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations at 20 and 50 cm (measured with an infra-red gas analyzer and soil gas wells)
- Soil temperature
- Soil moisture
- Snow depth

Once all data had been collected (field measurements were finished by the end of March), the students began working in small groups to analyze their data. Each group addressed a main question based upon their initial research questions and hypotheses. The students addressed whether soil moisture or soil temperature was a greater control of soil CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations, how soil CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations, soil moisture, and soil temperature varied between the ecosites as well as across seasons, and how snow depth differed between ecosites. The students learned how to use Microsoft Excel to average their data, and made graphs to compare data between ecosites and through time. The

students then created a scientific poster presentation using Microsoft PowerPoint. There are plans for the students to present their poster at a local school board meeting.



## Gallatin County

### Chief Joseph Middle School

#### Chief Joseph Middle School: A Community of Learners

The great strategist Chief Joseph played a major role in the tragic last phase of the “Indian Wars” in the far West. After a five-day siege with the United States Army, just outside of Idaho, Chief Joseph surrendered. Noted for his humanity in warfare, Chief Joseph thereafter devoted his efforts to helping his people learn peaceful ways.

The academic and personal standards expected of students at Chief Joseph Middle School are high. CJMS expects that all students will be successful and actively engaged in challenging, high-interest curricula. The faculty and staff embrace a vision of a nurturing environment to help develop students who, like Chief Joseph, are critical and compassionate thinkers, lifelong learners and informed participants in local and world affairs, and conscious of the shared humanity that binds all people together. We are a rich, varied learning community that values the contributions of all its members and strives to make them effective communicators and global citizens.

The CJMS student community values personal accountability, and academic challenge. This is clear whether you visit a classroom or talk to a student in the hallway. Teacher collaboration is the norm, creating a culture of sharing and respect. Teams of teachers work at knowing their students well. The parent and community value active and engaged learning for their students.



## Gallatin County

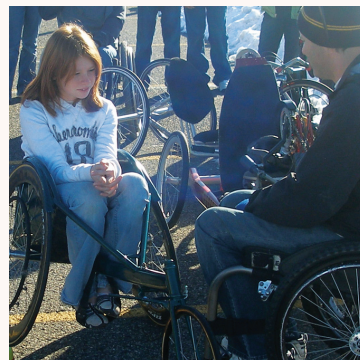
### Sacajawea Middle School

It's no coincidence that the building that became this school was named “Sacajawea,” an American Indian woman who established herself as the first woman explorer, traveling as a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Our middle school students are also explorers. Those of us who teach, live, work, and study here have purposefully joined our energies and talents in what is, in a way, an unusual sort of journey in this day and age. Together, we commit to the belief that demands in the academic classroom, combined with innovative programs to meet students' needs, produce independent minds, strong bodies, and powerful character.

What are those innovative programs?

- Peer mediation where trained student mediators help other students find solutions to their own conflicts
- A Prevention program to keep kids in school, help them make easier transitions from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school and to work with kids to make healthy choices.
- A Parent Liaison program that supports the home to school connection working directly with parents to access parenting strategies and community resources





- A CAP mentoring program that matches over fifty students in our school with community volunteers who come into the school once a week to spend an hour mentoring a student; these CAP volunteers often stay with students and follow them from middle school into our high school.
- A Survival 101 class for eighth graders that help them realize that they are now choices regarding academic, social life will affect their rest of their lives – esp. choices related to alcohol, drugs, and being influenced by a friend or peer group to become involved in risky behaviors.
- A Study Skills program with case management by classroom teachers for regular ed students
- Student Leadership programs to involve students in school wide decisions and community service

The hallways of our school are decorated with hundreds of black and white photographs, taken by one of our counselors. He loves to take close-up shots of students engaged in classroom activities or after school clubs. These photographs, along with a large collection of matted and framed student artwork, set the tone for a kid-centered environment at Sacajawea.





## Gallatin County

### Gallatin Gateway 7-8

A little bit about us...

Gallatin Gateway School is a rural kindergarten through eighth grade school that serves an average of 150 students per year. It was started in 1898, and for over a hundred years has fulfilled the needs of the rural families. The school has established itself in this deep rooted community and is continuing to thrive and expand to serve more and more students each year.

Our Mission:

The Gallatin Gateway School community is dedicated to enabling our students to be lifelong learners and productive citizens by meeting their needs in a positive atmosphere in which diversity is valued.



## Glacier County

### Browning Middle School

Browning Middle School Implements IEFA

Browning Middle School, in the heart of the Blackfeet Reservation, has been actively implementing Indian Education for All (IEFA). Blackfeet language and culture is imbedded into all of our content areas. Math class includes problems connected to many aspects of Native American culture and history, including geometric native designs and real-world situations on the Blackfeet reservation. Science students study how Native Americans used native plants and animals in their day to day life. In social studies, the students examine the history and contemporary issues of Native American peoples. PE plays Blackfeet games, and the students learn about health issues, such as diabetes, that have had great impact on the Blackfeet community. One day per week in language arts the students study the language and culture of the Blackfeet people. Carolyn Zuback, our Blackfeet/Native American teacher, instructs the students in the Blackfeet language. The students also create Native American art while learning about the culture of their ancestors. This year, the students are making beautifully beaded pens. Thanks to the efforts of all our BMS teachers, our students are truly learning what it means to be a proud Native American in contemporary American society, while maintaining a strong connection with the history and culture of their Blackfeet ancestors.



## Hill County

### Box Elder 7-8

The teachers at Box Elder Middle School are just finishing their second year in a very important and successful transition. Exactly two years ago, our superintendent, Mr. Robert Heppner, informed his middle school teachers that we would be moving into contained classrooms starting in the 2006-2007 school year with Mr. Darin Hannum as our new principal.

Many of us had taught one subject for many years, and the idea of teaching a subject that we didn't have a lot of experience with was a little scary. In our first year of the transition, Box Elder Middle School students did very well on the MontCas Standardized Test. We feel positive about this year's MontCas test scores. As teachers that were involved in this middle school transition to contained classrooms from the very beginning, we have been strong supporters of this plan. We worked together to make it successful.

We knew from the beginning that it was the best thing we could do for our students knowing that their learning would increase along with their sense of security in their school. We also knew that our ability to build strong relationships with our students would improve while increasing their opportunity to learn.

As teachers, we all strive to find opportunities to make the educational process as successful as possible. The Box Elder Middle School teachers feel that we are working hard together for the benefit of our students' education and it is working!



## Hill County

### Havre Middle School

At Havre Middle School we work to develop the whole child. Academics and Technology at HMS are outstanding! Our students participate in state writing and art contests as well as the MCTM math contests every year. Our own HMS News is a weekly student news production aired to keep everyone informed about what's happening at HMS. But missing school doesn't mean our kids miss out. Our teachers offer online classroom and distance learning resources for students and parents to access from any Internet connection to keep up with our busy classroom curriculum.

Good citizens work hard and take care of themselves and others. HMS students become mentors for Head Start kids and role models for primary students in kindergarten and first grade with reading activity groups. We also raise money to redecorate rooms at the Care Center for seniors and prepare care packages for students overseas. Raising money and contributing food for the homeless shelter and Pennies for Peace are just some of our many donations.

And last but not least, Havre Middle School's extra curricular programs are great! We offer six different athletic programs for students and a variety of co-curricular programs in the fine-arts area. We host a monthly Fine Arts night where our artists, choirs, bands, and jazz groups all present their finest works for the public to enjoy.



**Havre Middle School**

## Hill County

### Rocky Boy Jr. High

#### STARS

Rocky Boy School District adopted a new motto/vision statement:

STARS – Striving Towards Academics, Respect, and Success. To reiterate this motto, our Jr. High students earned STARS Bucks for their successful academic measures, positive behavior in and out of class, and attendance. Students were able to use their STARS Bucks to “buy” incentive prizes in May at a school “Auction and Fun Night.”

#### COMMUNITY BBQ

The past few years, we have begun our school year with a community barbeque. This allows our school community (administrators, trustees, staff, elders, parents, and students) to gather in a relaxed social setting.

#### NATIVE AMERICAN WEEK

This year during Native American Week, our school invited the North Star School to participate in our school-wide mini-powwow and round dance. Our students had the opportunity to share their culture with others by showcasing their talents in singing and dance.

#### GEAR-UP

7th and 8th grade students participated in various Gear-Up activities throughout the year. Students were able to utilize a new mobile lab (15 laptop computers) to write their Gear-Up Essays for the annual writing contest. This essay is a required assignment for Ms. Rachel Seiler’s 7th and 8th grade classes. Students also participated in the Gear-Up Poster Contest, had college visits, and entertained career speakers with the help of Mrs. Juanita Roasting Stick, Gear-Up Liaison.



#### SCIENCE CLUB

With the help of Gear-Up, students had the opportunity to join Science Club, under the direction of Ms. Teresa Olson. Students have learned about careers in the science and technology fields.

#### SMART LAB

With the opening of our Smart Lab, 7th and 8th grade students had the opportunity to work on hands-on types of projects such as: robotics, music recording, graphic design, clay animation, and photography, just to name a few!

#### EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Rocky Boy Jr. High also offers students many ways to explore extracurricular activities. Sports, theater, scaling the climbing wall, spelling bee, math competitions, talent show, and community involvement projects are some of the activities students engage in. Some of our students won the anti-Meth poster contest!





## Jefferson County

### Montana City Middle School

At Montana City School, we attain the highest standard of educational excellence by operating “above the line” in everything we do. Montana City School’s advantage combines safety, support and belonging to leverage the potential of each individual student.

*Magnificent Middle School  
Outstanding Staff  
Near and Dear  
Teaching Skills  
Never Knowing What Great Things Will Come  
Amazed Every Day*

*Cool School  
Interesting Things Learned  
Terrific Talents  
Yippee!*

*Super Students  
Clean Environment  
Hallway Adventures  
Odd Facts  
Oodles of Fun  
Lively Learning*

*-Jolene Glueckert and Kyrie McCullough*

## Lake County

### Charlo Middle School

The Charlo Middle School is located in Charlo, Montana which is located 50 miles north of Missoula on the Flathead Indian Reservation. Eighty students, grades 6, 7, and 8 make up our student body. Students participate in band, jazz band, choir, football, volleyball, basketball, track, and academic bowl. Charlo Middle School is proud of their achievements in academics and extra curricular activities.



## Lake County

### Ronan Middle School

The Ronan Middle School is located in the beautiful Mission Valley in the middle of the Flathead Indian Reservation, the home of the Salish and Kootenai Tribes. Our area is rich with cultural heritage and enrichment. We celebrate our commitment to the community and literacy by hosting an annual One Book/One Community event. We purchase 500 copies of a title that has ties to our area and students. Every student and staff member in our school is given a book of their own. We also include the 5th graders and use this as a “bridging” activity. Several copies are dispersed within the community as well. Many activities are planned around the themes in the book and we culminate with an author visit. This gives our students and community members some common vocabulary and experiences that can be used as conversation starters.

This year’s author was Vincent Schilling. He spent three days at RMS talking with students about his book, *Native Athletes in Action!* This book includes 13 biographies about Native American athletes. He shared his inspirational message, “Don’t ever let someone tell you that you can’t do something!”



## Lewis and Clark County

### East Valley Middle School

“Success for All”

Mission Statement: East Valley Middle School challenges students to strive for lifelong success.

No two days are the same at East Valley Middle School. A visit to our classrooms will find students actively engaged in learning and seeking to discover new knowledge. We offer advanced programs in math and Spanish enabling 8th graders to enter higher level courses in high school. We work towards remediation of reading and math skills for our struggling learners through our Corrective Reading program and our Math Extension classes. Tutoring is available for all students before and after school, and our summer school program is designed to reduce the amount of skills lost over the summer break.

Our staff is trained in the 40 Developmental Assets, and they work tirelessly to build new, significant relationships with students. Student incentive programs include:

- Monthly Positives which rewards students for turning work in and staying out of detention and
- TIGER PRIDE which rewards kids for doing positive things around the school to help others and make EVMS a better place to be.

We recognize award recipients at the end of each trimester with a special awards assembly. We promote life-time sports through our activity based field trips including skiing at Great Divide, ice skating, and bowling for all students. Kids who are into archery learn more about it through their PE classes and our traditional archery group meets after school and competes at the local and state level. Our athletic program offers volleyball, basketball, track, cross country and a full range of intramural sporting activities.

We are implementing a new behavioral plan through the guidance of the Montana Behavior Initiative and are developing data based goals and objectives as well as

working with students to redefine behavioral expectations. The PAW (Peers At Work) team works closely with the principal and teachers to improve the school and do community service projects such as helping younger students with various projects at Eastgate School. The Book Fair Crew promotes recreational reading for all students in the school and our Library Skills students work with the local Head Start to provide a partner reading program. The EVMS student council supports student activities and community events such as dances, the talent show, concessions at sporting events, salute to veterans, a blood drive, and canned food drive. Whether you're a scholar, musician, athlete or all three, EVMS has something to offer.

## Lewis and Clark County

### Helena Middle School

Helena Middle School: "Where Everyone Belongs"

On the first day of school after summer vacation at Helena Middle School (HMS), it wouldn't be unusual to see a group of new 6th graders touring the building dressed in shower curtain fish capes, shower caps, and swimming goggles, lead by their 8th grade mentor, who is waddling along in swim flippers and a diving mask. Another group tours while wearing large playing card placards and tiaras, identifying them as the kings and queens of hearts. Hallways ring with laughter; the gym rocks with music. In short, the beginning of the school year is one big celebration designed to ease transition worries and prevent a backward slide in student achievement as students move from small elementary schools to a larger middle school. Anxious 6th graders meet successful 8th grade mentors who help them get off to a fun and solid start!

For the last four years, over fifty 8th grade leaders have welcomed incoming 6th graders to HMS as part of the WEB (Where Everyone Belongs) orientation program. The program consists of large- and small-group icebreaker and getting-to-know-you activities, designed to connect students to their new school in fun and non-threatening ways. WEB is successful because it connects 8th grade student mentors to 6th graders while teaching 6th graders "the ropes" of how to succeed in middle school. Eighth graders receive leadership training that prepares them to lead a small group of 6th graders through orientation activities.

The transition from elementary school to middle school can produce anxiety in pre-teens and their parents. Moving to middle school has even been associated with a drop in academic achievement, especially for students from lower socio-economic groups. Shepherding kids through the first days of school can ease their fears and teach them the skills that help them succeed. WEB connects 6th graders to their new school community in a web of support that helps them feel less anxious and helps them to be academically and socially successful.





The WEB program fosters connections that benefit both 6th graders and 8th graders. Peer mentoring is one of the most effective models for influencing behavior at the middle school level. The WEB program allows 6th graders to experience 8th graders as positive mentors, influencing their attitudes and opinions of those older students right away. Students interviewed in 2003 by HMS staff reported that one of their greatest fears in coming to middle school was that they would experience bullying from 8th graders. Sixth graders were pleasantly surprised after their first days of school that year, and every year since then, they have realized that 8th graders can be caring, helpful and fun.

Eighth graders incur an additional benefit by becoming WEB leaders: They are trained to step into a positive leadership role and they are highly regarded by their 6th graders, which positively affects their esteem. Eighth graders are armed with a set of leadership skills that they will be able to use in a variety of settings throughout their school careers and carry with them into life.

Academic achievement also improves with the implementation of purposeful transition programs, according to research. New 6th graders are able to ask questions about the basics right away. Mentor 8th graders are a resource and can reassure new students that no question is too large or too small when learning about their new school. WEB leaders not only support 6th graders in the first week of school, but continue that support through year-long activities by conducting lessons in social issues, academic organization, and problem-solving.

Thanks to the WEB orientation program, 6th graders can leave their first-day jitters at the door and confidently enter the new school year among friends and leaders who are there to lend a hand.



## Liberty County

### Chester-Joplin-Inverness Jr. High

The Chester-Joplin-Inverness Junior High is located in the heart of the Hi-line. The Chester-Joplin-Inverness (CJI) School is towards the outskirts of Chester, but because the school is always been used by people, it seems as if it's in the middle. Located less than 50 miles away from the Sweet Grass Hills and around 60 miles west of Havre, Chester is practically the ideal place to be! The High School end of the school was built in 1951 (that's where the junior high does their studies.)

CJI students are 7th and 8th graders who participate in various extracurricular activities including: football, volleyball, cheerleading, basketball, wrestling, track, and Teens Against Tobacco Use (TATU). Our curriculum varies from the four core subject areas to courses in math and reading. We also have band, choir, Spanish, keyboarding, weight training, art, shop, and consumer science.

Our school normally has many field trips for the junior high, but they are always spontaneous and a spur of the moment thing. The field trips are always very fun and educational. It is our goal here at CJI to make sure that every student has fun, feels safe, and learns everything they wish to learn (and of course some things they don't.) No matter what, our school is the best in the west.



## Lincoln County

### Eureka Middle School

Eureka Middle School is a place for kids to excel and celebrate their excellence. We are a two story building that holds 5th and 6th grades on the first floor and 7th and 8th grades on the second floor. Our kids have a rare mixture of separation based on the ages and a team concept as to how they perform. Our mission is to inspire all students to be respectful, responsible, lifelong learners. We have formed a team of staff and students that follow the MBI model. We celebrate victories and appropriately re-teach concepts students need reinforced. The town of Eureka holds about 2500 hard working, dedicated people. We take every opportunity possible to incorporate the skills and values the community has and bring them into our schools. Eureka Middle School and the town of Eureka is a great place to grow and learn together!



## Missoula County

### C S Porter Middle School

#### Professionalism

At C.S. Porter, we are a community of professional educators and will model appropriate behavior in a variety of ways. We will demonstrate mutual respect by being on time, prepared, and ready to contribute. By keeping common goals in mind, we will remain focused and on task.

#### Communication

As professionals, we will communicate clearly, openly and respectfully. We will provide and accept constructive criticism. We will listen actively and value input from all team members. We will use appropriate humor and professionalism to develop trust and create a positive team environment.

#### Structure

At C.S. Porter we recognize that having a structure for meetings contributes to their success. Utilizing agendas and protocols will enable our meetings to stay focused. Groups will stay productive by taking a problem-solving, progress-oriented approach which respects and honors the process involved. Recognizing individual strengths and challenges will assist us in sharing leadership and responsibilities.



## Missoula County

### Lolo Middle School

At Lolo Middle School we have Lolo **P.R.I.D.E.** We ...

**P**romote Cooperation

**R**espect Ourselves and Others

**I**nspire a Love of Learning

**D**o our Best

**E**ncourage the Positive.

Our school is located 8 miles south of Missoula and our promoted 8th graders attend Sentinel High School in Missoula. Our academic program in 7th & 8th grades consists of the core subjects of math (algebra for advanced 8th grade math students), language arts, social studies, science, health/PE, Family and Consumer Science, and keyboarding/computer applications. Music, Art and Spanish are offered on a trimester basis. Band is also available for students in grade 5-8. Our 8th graders typically put on an 8th grade production every year which is a joint project between the language arts and the social studies teachers.

Lolo Middle School students in 7th and 8th grades participate in various school activities flag football, volleyball, and basketball, and track and student council. 6th grade students are eligible to participate in track and student council. There is also access to extra-curricular programs sponsored by various organizations in Missoula and many of the programs conduct practices here at Lolo School.

Our mascot is the logger, in reference to the fact that logging played a major part in the history of the Lolo community. Our logger is a friendly guy as long as he is treated fairly and with respect. If that doesn't happen, a transformation takes place. Lolo Loggers....

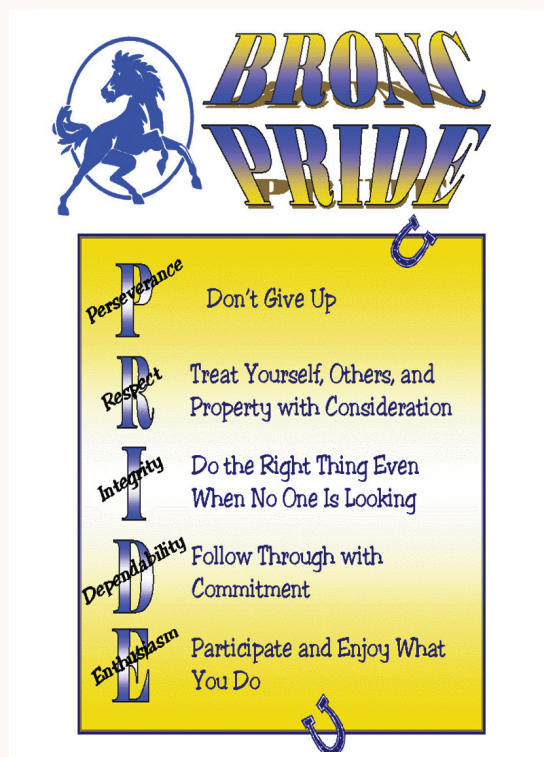
Treat us well.....don't unleash..... the beast!



## Musselshell County

### Melstone 7-8

Melstone School has been involved in MBI (Montana Behavioral Initiative) for a number of years. Melstone is home of the Broncos; therefore, we chose five characteristics (Perseverance, Respect, Integrity, Dependability, and Enthusiasm) which make up the key aspects of our character education program and the basis of our school-wide expectations: Bronc **PRIDE**. Earlier this year, to reinforce those key school-wide expectations, we sponsored a poster contest for the students. The winning poster became the new way to display our **PRIDE**. Copies were made and hung in every classroom and common areas. This spring we instituted a ticket system to recognize and reward positive behaviors. Teachers are issued tickets at the beginning of each week which allows them to recognize students for displaying one of the targeted behaviors. These tickets will all be put in a drawing with the overall prize being a gift certificate.





## Musselshell County

### Roundup Jr. High School

Hundreds of well-dressed 7th and 8th grade students pile off busses at Roundup Junior High School on a Friday late in March. They are here to compete in the Academic Olympics, an event the school has sponsored annually for over 25 years. Students compete in music, art, spelling, science, math, geography, and speaking events hoping to take home prizes of savings bonds, medals, certificates, or simply the satisfaction of having done their best. Roundup students spend hours of their own time honing their skills so that they can represent their school against students from the dozen or more competing schools, some of them 100 or more miles away.



*Sarah Miller, Hunter Borner, and Justine Hice prepare for Academic Olympics*

## Park County

### Pine Creek 7-8

We are a rural 3-room school with students grades K-8. Last fall our 1st-8th grade students were involved in a place based, student driven project. We took a field trip to local Carter's Bridge and allowed each student the opportunity to pose a question. We then used the rest of the semester to bring in experts, set up field trips, and research (all arranged by the students) to help answer the questions. In February we held a Project Fair and invited the community, parents, and friends to watch each student present their findings. It was up to the students to decide how they wanted to display their work. We had power point presentations; skits, designed websites, and books were written and illustrated. The fair was an enormous success! Not only were the students in charge of their learning but they were excited about becoming experts themselves on their topic.



## Phillips County

### Malta Jr. High School

The 7th graders at Malta Junior High honor the 8th graders, faculty, and staff with a luncheon in the cafeteria during an extended lunch hour. It is a time to honor each other and to practice a fine dining experience including dressy clothing and tables arranged restaurant style complete with table linens and fine dinnerware. The 7th graders work in various classes to prepare decorations and the four course meal, and the 7th graders serve each course to the 8th graders and staff at their own tables. Some students volunteer to sing or play instruments for entertainment. Everyone looks forward to this event.



*Annual Junior High Honor Luncheon Malta Junior High School*



## Powell County

### E F Duvall Jr. High

#### Job Seeking Skills Project

Every spring, the eighth grade students at EF DuVall participate in a three-week unit related to job skills. This exercise is designed to help the students understand what the “real world” job market is all about. The emphasis is on learning the process of applying for a job and how to meet employer expectations. Most of these students will be looking for employment as they continue their education through high school and beyond. We believe that finding a job, like most things in life, is a learned skill. Those who learn how to prepare and apply for jobs will be more successful throughout the process.

We have created a fictional corporation to give structure to the process of interviewing for a job. This business provides a wide variety of entry-level service type jobs, which are commonly available to applicants who have little or no work experience. The students are each interviewed by members of the Deer Lodge business community. They are provided feedback from these members so that they can hone their interviewing skills. The students are actively engaged in the process and are eager to put what they have learned into practice.

This is truly a wonderful experience for all of our students here at EF DuVall Junior High School.





## Ravalli County

### Corvallis Middle School

When students walk in the doors of Corvallis Middle School, they immediately sense that this school is alive and vibrant with a positive atmosphere. The hallways are bright and cheerful and decorated with student work. Teachers routinely say “hello” to students. The classrooms are environments where students of all levels are challenged to think, to apply, to dream and to create as they work together to reach consistently high expectations. This is a school where students feel safe, valued and responsible for their contributions. Our teachers continually strive to establish positive relationships with all students and provide lessons and activities that are both challenging and meaningful.

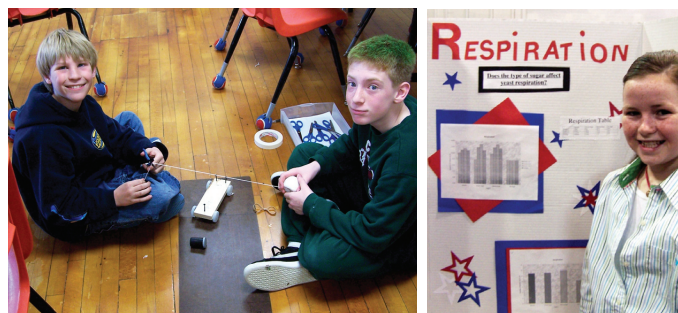
Corvallis Middle School was awarded the National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence in 2001 and has continued its commitment to excellence since that time. Our middle school offers an extensive guidance program, advisory classes at every grade level, and our teachers work closely together on interdisciplinary teams and meet regularly to discuss student needs and curriculum issues. In addition to offering high quality core classes, we also provide an extensive computer/technology curriculum, and offer a wide variety of exploratory classes and extra and co-curricular activities. We are a middle school in name and philosophy, and our vision for excellence can be summarized in three words: relationships, relevance, and rigor.



## Ravalli County

### Hamilton Middle School

Student-centered grade-level teams and positively reinforced student behavior comprise the dual cornerstones that shape the ethos and culture of Hamilton Middle School's community of learners. Ask what's best for kids and you have touched the pulse of our purpose, the question that drives all school-wide decision making. Rigorous academics laden with lofty expectations blend daily in a student's schedule while experiencing elective classes that slice into real life. While students immerse themselves in our immensely popular choir, band and art classes, their schedules are flexible enough to experiment with learning guitar, lifetime sports, advanced computer skills, or hands-on community service. After the school day is over all students are welcome to play on the school teams and represent their school in football, basketball, track, cross-country, volleyball, cheerleading and wrestling. For the more eclectic learner, after school programs are also available. What's best for kids? Hamilton Middle School!



## Ravalli County

### Stevensville Jr. High School

The Stevensville Junior High is located in the middle of the Stevensville Schools k-12 campus. Located in the Bitterroot Valley, south of Missoula, SJHS main building was built in 1901, making it one of the oldest occupied public school buildings in the state.

SJHS students are 7th and 8th graders who participate in various school sporting activities (football, volleyball, basketball, track), Student Council, and Teens in Partnership (TIP). Our curriculum varies from Honors courses in the four core subject areas to workshop courses in math and reading. We offer electives in band, choir, weight training, art, shop and crafts.

Our students take a class trip each year one year, it will be to the territorial prison in Deer Lodge and the Montana Mining Museum in Butte to visit Montana's historical past and the next year it will be to Helena to see the Legislature and visit the CM Russell museum. It is our mission to educate every student that walks through the doors of Stevensville Junior High intellectually, socially and personally.



## Ravalli County

### Victor Middle School

Located in the heart of the Bitterroot Valley  
Named after the Great Chief Victor of the Salish tribe

Victor Middle School is a small rural school located in Western Mountain. The middle school consists of approximately seventy students. Victor has wonderful middle school faculty and staff that make Victor a positive work environment for all! Victor students have a variety of activities that they participate in such as Math Counts, plays, and sports. Each grade offers an array of hands-on projects, academic challenges, and creativity for all students.

In the 6th grade the focus has been on team work, habits of mind, positive communication and useful creative learning! The sixth grade starts team building activities on the first day. To reinforce the idea of team work the students are taken to Trapper Job Corps to learn new skills that would help them complete a low and high ropes course. Students need to work together to encourage and promote a safe environment where all can feel comfortable in their effort to overcome fear.

The 6th grade focuses on promoting positive communication with parents. Parents meet with teachers in the first two weeks of school. The meeting allows teachers to see their students through the parents' eyes, as well as, get to know the teacher. Establishing positive communications with parents the first few weeks of school has proven to improve parent/teacher relationships at the school.

As students approach the 21st century, they will need to be competitive in a global market and educators we can no longer rely simply on traditional educational strategies. To meet these demands, our teachers are supplementing and/or replace some traditional methods of instruction with innovative educational experiences. Victor is using technology and multimedia applications as a tool to enhance a students' educational experience by creating a



variety of methods to meet special needs, teach children how to manage information, and allow for opportunities to develop higher level thinking skills. Students have focused on the many different uses technology has to offer them this year. Students have learned about podcasting, video casting, blogging, collaboration projects with others from around the world, used GPS and have a better understanding of its role, and building special effects in websites.

In 7th & 8th grade teachers have really shined this year too! Here are a few highlights. The Victor 7th grade Art class studied the work of contemporary earth artist, Andy Goldsworthy who is known for his nature constructions done in remote settings. The students tried their hands at Earth Art, too and really enjoyed the results of creating with natural elements. Their works, which could only be made using simple gravity, or by connecting materials with thorns or moisture are considered ephemeral or lasting a very short time. Nature's disarray is part of her charm. When man attempts to organize natural materials, making shapes and patterns which are found unexpectedly by any who happen to come by, the contrast is stark, causing the viewer to take note, and perhaps see the known environment in a new way.

Earth Art explores our relationship to the natural world in two ways; first through our inability to control nature over the long term, and second, our desire to manipulate nature. The 7th grade artists worked on the elementary playground using water on cement for light or dark value, dandelions for color, sticks and rose briar for line and texture and rocks for form. Warning! Neither paint, charcoal nor clay was used in the making of these art works! To preserve the artists' efforts we documented them with a camera, but some of the plant-based pieces were left on the playground. The elementary students were quite curious when they came out for recess and even amended some of them. They are young enough to understand that their playground can provide limitless possibilities if they use imagination while working with familiar spaces and materials.

The 7th and 8th grade Math/Science department has a really strong reputation for pushing students and bringing out creativity! This department participates in Science Olympiad. Students make it to state yearly. Students work

hard to participate in Math Counts and make it to regionals and finals! Our students are creative, persistent, and self-managing when it comes to Math and Science! Victor School is present in the science and math world locally.

Victor school has much to offer students and families. The school and community work hand-in hand here. Our students will be well equipped with the tools that are needed in high school and life.



## Roosevelt County

### Poplar Middle School

“Whatever it takes; We Can, We Will

Poplar Middle School, comprised of 5th -8th grade, serves about 250 students. We live by sixteen character traits that have shaped an advisory period every day. A student assembly is held every Monday morning as students arrive, where they are recognized for their accomplishments the week before. Thursday morning is Club Day, where each student has the opportunity to be in one of twenty-five clubs for the first 30 minutes of the day. We offer archery, chess, beading, scrap booking, embroidery, and outdoor club, just to mention a few. A character education curriculum is followed the other three days each week.

Hands-on integrated units are a focus for students so they can make better connections with knowledge so they learn to apply, analyze, evaluate and create. As well as the core subjects, several specials are offered such as art, choir, guitar band, home ec, keyboarding, technology, and math lab.

Extra-curricular activities give students a chance to try out athletic and leadership skills. Cross country, football, basketball, track, wrestling, cheerleading, and student council give students many choices. The music department and student council department offer students fun and educational trips each year. The P.E. department takes 7th graders on a bowling trip to Glasgow to try out the objectives from a bowling unit. 7th and 8th graders attend Academic Olympics each year, and many of our classes travel for field trips to the Minot Zoo. School is a great adventure at PMS.



## Sanders County

### Thompson Falls Jr. High School

We believe

.. students learn in different ways and at varying rates; we respect and support those differences.

..with the support of the community we can provide a respectful, safe, and caring school environment.

..certain district and societal rules require immediate student consequences.

..with appropriate adult guidance, discipline should be considered an opportunity for student personal growth.

..keeping in mind a student's self respect and dignity, a student should be provided an opportunity to learn to solve his/her own problem.

..in updating our district curriculum to keep pace with the changing world.

..in integrating technology within every academic area at all levels.

..in the school improvement process to maximize student learning.

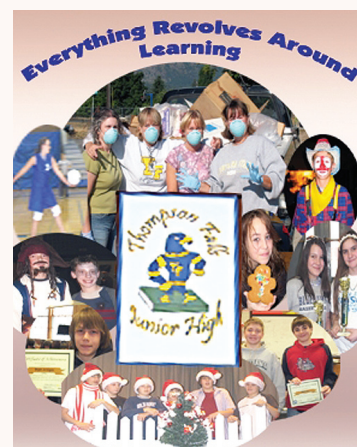
..it is important to have ongoing training and in-service for staff so that educational practices will be based upon research, information, and proven procedures.

..with parent, community, and school support, students can become contributing members of society.

..learning is a life long process and is a key to success.

..the school must provide opportunities for students to develop critical thinking by respecting and concentrating on academic, cultural, and life skills as outlined under state standards.

..in celebrating success





## Silver Bow County

### East Middle School

East Middle School implemented the Olweus Anti-bullying Program during the 2007-2008 school year. The Olweus intervention program against bullying has gained both international and national recognition. This program was recently selected as one of ten model programs by the U. S. Department of Justice.

An anti-bullying committee was established and received training from the Olweus organization in October. The committee membership included teachers, administrators, law enforcement, school board members and parents.

In early October, East Middle School students completed a survey to provide baseline information as to where and when bullying is happening in the school. This activity provided initial data that can be analyzed and compared to the same survey that students will complete in early May.

The entire staff was trained during December. Staff members were schooled on how to conduct classroom meetings on specific anti-bullying topics. They were trained to know when to issue behavioral referrals, which are used to document bullying activities that they observe in the school.

The program was implemented during the week of January 7-11. Activities included a parent night, writing contests, student council participation, and culminated on January 11, when the school officially kicked off the program. The support from parents and community was overwhelming.

Since January, this program has been very active at East. The school is benefiting from the effort. Our disciplinary data indicates that there is less fighting at school and we have noticed a positive school climate. We are hopeful that the student survey to be completed in May will provide additional data indicating that the program is effective.

We are confident that the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program will make a big difference in our school and community.



## Stillwater County

### Columbus Middle School

#### “Home of the Cougars”

When you first look CMS is just like any other school- but take a seat in one of the classrooms and you can sense the trust between the teachers and students.

Walk into the lunchroom and you will see people with all different interests sitting and talking with each other.

Sit in on a sports game and you can experience the balance between competition and good sportsmanship.

Listen to an academic club's discussion and you will hear the intellect and depth of their conversations.

Stroll down the hallways and listen to the chatter and laughing between all of the CMS students and teachers.

We may be one of the biggest families, but that's what we are...a family! Once you have experienced Columbus Middle School, you'll never want to leave.



Back Row (Left to Right): Football, Builders Club, Yearbook, Academic Olympics, Student Council, NJHS, Spelling Bee, Girls' Basketball, Boys' Basketball Front Row (Left to Right): Geography Bee, Volleyball, Battle of the Books, Math Counts, Wrestling, Cross Country, Track

## Yellowstone County

### Lewis & Clark Middle School

Our mission at Lewis and Clark Middle School is to provide a quality education for all students. Our school strives to guide students to:

- become life-long learners
- attain individual potential
- dream beyond these walls
- be prepared for the challenges of the 21st century

Our task at Lewis and Clark is to provide an education for the kinds of kids we have, not the kinds of kids we used to have, want to have, or those that exist in our dreams.



## Yellowstone County

### Will James Middle School

Will James Middle School enjoys a very strong state wide reputation as a premier middle school with high academic standards, a dynamic commitment to professional development, a thoughtful and innovative approach to instruction based on the middle school concept and a warm and supportive school community.

Will James offers its students a superior education to prepare them to be responsible world citizens who think creatively, reason critically, communicate effectively and learn enthusiastically throughout life



## Yellowstone County

### Canyon Creek 7-8

Way to Go Canyon Creek!

Sixteen dedicated life science students worked to plant two hundred shrubs at the Audubon Conservation Education Center near Billings. Our project was potting bare root seedlings. The shrubs will remain in the center nursery until next fall. Then we will return to the ACEC and give the snowberries, hawthorns, wild roses, etc. a permanent home in the developing under story.

Around 2000 the concept of the Center was adopted. Canyon Creek middle school students eagerly have worked summers, weekends, after school and occasionally during the school day to facilitate the reclamation of the area.





## Yellowstone County

### Huntley Project Jr. High School

Huntley Project Junior High is a school deeply rooted in tradition. Each year, students participate in a variety of both academic and extra-curricular activities that foster intellectual growth and boost school spirit. Many of these activities have become annual traditions. At HPJHS students participate in a weeklong Homecoming Spirit Week. Each day, the students are encouraged to dress-up in themed costumes. This all leads up to the big homecoming day! Students in 7th grade English classes put on an annual wax museum. Every year there is a new theme, for example, Americans Who Shaped Our Nation. Students embrace their characters and try to “one-up” the previous year’s museum. At Huntley Project Junior High, we like to reward the wonderful students who roam our halls with an annual reward trip. Students have the option of spending the day on the ski slopes or going swimming/bowling. It is a great day to unwind and get refreshed for a new semester of learning. We are proud of the achievements of all of our students at HPJHS and the traditions that they are passing on to the future generations that will grace these halls!!



## Yellowstone County

### Laurel Middle School

After three years of meeting, planning, designing, and revising, the construction of Laurel Middle School was completed and we started our school year in a brand new building. The building houses students in grades 5-8 with each grade level in a different “wing”. Our Library Media center is centrally located in the building and connected to the three computer labs that are available for teacher use throughout the day. LMS is a state of the art building utilizing the latest technology to facilitate and enhance the learning environment. All classrooms have an LCD projector mounted in the ceiling as well as an amplification system for better hearing throughout the room. About half of the staff currently have Smart Board screens in their rooms that are an integral aspect of how they deliver instruction and promote student learning. The middle school philosophy of providing for students’ social, emotional and social development is incorporated into the design. Each wing has a “break out” area for students to congregate, and a centrally located commons/cafeteria space serves as a “meeting” place as well. The classrooms are spacious enough to allow for group and cooperative learning in a safe, supportive learning environment. The hallways are illuminated by skylights that provide natural lighting throughout the building. The new building was built for 600 and currently boasts an enrollment of 593! We are forever grateful to the Laurel community for pulling together to support building a new middle school and partnering with us in its design.

The 2007-08 School Year will certainly be a year to remember the Laurel Middle School staff, students and the community!



*Students release balloons at the completion of the Dedication Ceremony for the new school. The balloons contained an individual student message about “What I like best about Laurel Middle School ...”*



## Yellowstone County

### Lockwood Middle School

Lockwood Middle School is home to approximately 400 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. Sitting on a campus of over fifty acres, the school is one of many buildings and shares the grounds with over 1000 students and 150 + staff members.

Lockwood Middle School is committed to high academic achievement and life skills development in a safe and supportive environment where all students are encouraged to succeed. We recognize that middle-level students are unique and require an environment that nurtures individuals academically, intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically. By permitting a wide exploration of personal interests, it is our desire to help pupils understand themselves as unique individuals with personal needs and social responsibilities. By fostering independent learning, individual maturity, and responsibility, we will enable the students to develop into young adults ready for high school and ready to be responsible citizens.

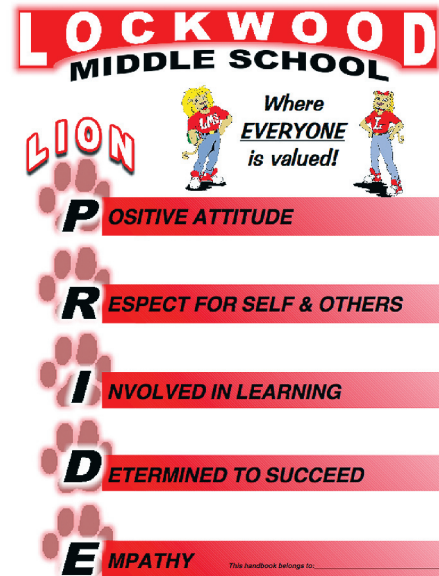
The staff at Lockwood Middle School believes that curriculum should be challenging, integrative, and exploratory. We believe that varied teaching and learning approaches are essential and that assessment and evaluation promote learning. We believe in a flexible organizational structure that constructs programs and policies that foster health, wellness, and safety for all students.

In August of 2008, we will open in a new, 65,000 sq. foot middle school on the southern end of our campus. The building was designed by staff, students and community in a collaborative effort to enhance the middle school philosophy.

Another important component of L.M.S. is our participation in MBI (The Montana Behavioral Initiative) Each year, for the past five years, we have sent a team of staff members to the annual MBI Summer Institute for training. In the winter of 2007 we hosted our first regional M.B.I. workshop

with Mr. Tim Lewis. Plans are to continue with these trainings on an annual basis to assist other MBI schools in Eastern Montana.

Our proudest moment came last June when our school was given the MBI Exemplar School Award which recognizes schools that significantly contribute to making a difference for their students, parents, and faculty utilizing the MBI and have demonstrated evidence of change.



Home of the Lions

## Closing Message

I am honored to serve Montana's middle grades communities as the middle school curriculum specialist. Middle school has always held a special place for me, having taught at that level for several years.

There are many challenges facing middle grades educators today. One of the most important is helping our students build a foundation of preparedness for their future. It is during this time in a student's education where strong habits of study and learning to balance the academic with the social begin. It is a critical time in their development. The cornerstone of middle school philosophy is "...no other age level has so clear and legitimate a claim to the designation of unique as does this period of transition between childhood and later adolescence." (NMSA 2002) Also unique to this time in the life of children is the way in which teachers must educate them. The philosophy behind middle level education speaks to a method of teaching focused on engaging the emotional, social, intellectual, and individuality of each child. Coupled with hands-on, project-based learning experiences, teaching in this way prepares our youth for the secondary, collegiate, and work environments.

This publication is the first of many ways in which the middle grades communities will be able to share with each other the wonderful achievements, programs, and learning experiences that are taking place all across our great state. There will also be new opportunities for educators dedicated to teaching students in this age group to network with each other, whether they are in a small, rural school or one of the larger, urban districts. The benefits to students, teachers, administrators and staff will be infinite!

I am excited about these upcoming advantageous chances for all of the members of our middle grades communities!

*Kim Warrick*



# Appendices

## Appendix A

### 10.55.902 Basic Education Program: Middle Grades

#### 10.30.201 APPROVAL CRITERIA--MIDDLE SCHOOL

(1) In considering a request for approval to open a middle school, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall utilize the criteria set forth below:

(a) the program must comprise the work of grades 4 through 8 or any combination thereof, as defined in 20-6-501 (1), MCA;

(b) the middle school must be organized and administered to provide a cohesive unit within the educational system of the school district. A cohesive unit shall be interpreted as a portion of a school system which is located in one area of the school facilities, is under the overall direction of a single administrative leadership, and is easily identifiable as a unique school unit;

(c) sufficient evidence must be provided that, if established, the middle school can meet state accreditation standards for middle schools adopted as set forth in Title 10, chapter 55 by the Board of Public Education;

(d) other factors may be taken into account which are deemed reasonable and appropriate to consider in establishment of a middle school.

History: 20-3-106, MCA; IMP, 20-6-507, MCA; TRANS & AMD, 1990 MAR p. 505, Eff. 3/16/90.

20-6-501. Definition of various schools. As used in this title, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the term "school" means an institution for the teaching of children that is established and maintained under the laws of the state of Montana at public expense. The trustees of a district shall designate the grade assignments for the schools of the district, but for the purposes of this title each school is known as:

(1) an elementary school when it comprises the work of any combination of kindergarten, other preschool programs, or the first eight grades or their equivalents. A middle school is a school comprising the work of grades 4 through 8 or any combination of grades 4 through 8 that has been accredited as a middle school under the provisions of 20-7-102. When an accredited junior high school is operated by the district, grades 7 and 8 or their equivalents may not be considered as elementary grades.

(2) a high school when it comprises the work of one or more grades of schoolwork or their equivalents intermediate between the elementary schools and the institutions of higher education of the state of Montana. Types of high schools are designated as follows:

(a) a junior high school is a school comprising the work of grades 7 through 9 or their equivalents that has been accredited as a junior high school under the provisions of 20-7-102;

(b) a senior high school is a school that comprises the work of grades 10 through 12 or their equivalents and that is operated in conjunction with a junior high school;

(c) a 4-year high school is a school comprising the work of grades 9 through 12 or their equivalents.

History: En. 75-6601 by Sec. 199, Ch. 5, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 352, L. 1974; R.C.M. 1947, 75-6601(1), (2); amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 658, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 18, Ch. 219, L. 1997; amd.

20-6-507. Opening of middle school. The trustees of any elementary district may open a middle school when such opening has been approved by the superintendent of public instruction. The state superintendent shall investigate an application for the opening of a middle school and shall approve or disapprove the opening before the fourth Monday in June preceding the first year of intended operation. When a middle school opening is approved, the county superintendent shall estimate the ANB after investigating the probable enrollment for the middle school. The ANB so estimated shall be used for budgeting and BASE funding program purposes during the ensuing school fiscal year.

History: En. 75-6609 by Sec. 2, Ch. 352, L. 1974; R.C.M. 1947, 75-6609.

## Appendix B

### National Middle School Association

Since its inception in 1973, National Middle School Association (NMSA) has been a voice for those committed to meeting the educational and developmental needs of young adolescents. NMSA is the only national education association dedicated exclusively to the growth of middle level education.

With more than 30,000 members representing principals, teachers, central office personnel, professors, college students, parents, community leaders, and educational consultants across the United States, Canada, and 46 other countries, NMSA welcomes and provides support to anyone interested in the health and education of young adolescents. In addition, NMSA has a network of 58 affiliate organizations in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Australia, strengthening our outreach to the regional, state, provincial, and local levels.

Through the release of our landmark position paper *This We Believe: Successful Schools for Young Adolescents*, NMSA has been a key resource to middle level educators looking to develop more effective schools. Our message is for schools to be academically excellent, developmentally responsive, and socially equitable for every young adolescent.

NMSA publishes the highly acclaimed *Middle School Journal* and *Middle Ground* magazine to support members throughout the year, in addition to publishing more than 100 books on a wide variety of middle level education topics. Our Web site, [www.nmsa.org](http://www.nmsa.org), provides a wealth of research and resources for educators, a complete online bookstore, and professional development event informa-

tion. In addition to our annual conference, one of the largest professional development events in education today with nearly 10,000 attendees, NMSA offers a wide variety of more specialized professional development opportunities, including customized on-site professional development.

For more information about NMSA and our services, visit us online at [www.nmsa.org](http://www.nmsa.org) or call 1-800-528-NMSA.

National Middle School Association  
4151 Executive Parkway, Suite 300  
Westerville, OH 43081  
1800-528-NMSA      [www.nmsa.org](http://www.nmsa.org)

### The National Middle School Association Mission Statement

The National Middle School Association is dedicated to improving the educational experiences of young adolescents by providing vision, knowledge, and resources to all who serve them in order to develop healthy, productive, and ethical citizens.

### NMSA Goals

To extend NMSA's status as the leading advocate for the education and well-being of young adolescents.

To develop and provide high quality, relevant programs, resources, and services that will support the diverse needs of members and affiliates as they engage in activities on behalf of middle level education.

To create and utilize resources of such quality that NMSA ensures its own stability, growth, and continued leadership in the field of middle level education.



## This I Believe

I have chosen to be a middle level educator, for I recognize that the years of early adolescence are pivotal and abound with individual potential and opportunity. Therefore, I will care for these students personally, listen to their voices, respect their concerns, and engage them in meaningful educational experiences that will prepare them for a promising future.

### *I believe that every young adolescent. . .*

- has the capacity to learn, grow, and develop into a knowledgeable, reflective, caring, ethical, and contributing citizen.
- must have access to the very best programs and practices a school can offer.
- must be engaged in learning that is relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory.
- thrives academically, socially, and emotionally in a democratic learning environment where trust and respect are paramount and where family and community are actively involved.
- faces significant life choices and needs support in making wise and healthy decisions.
- deserves educators who are prepared to work with this age group, who are themselves lifelong learners and committed to their own ongoing professional development and growth.

Therefore, I proudly dedicate myself to becoming the best middle level educator I can be and an active advocate for all young adolescents.

*This statement is based on **This we Believe: Successful Schools for Young Adolescents**, the position paper of National Middle School Association. [www.nmsa.org](http://www.nmsa.org)*

## Appendix C

### Resources

Montana State Government information: [www.mt.gov](http://www.mt.gov)

Office of Public Instruction information: [www.opi.mt.gov](http://www.opi.mt.gov)

OPI Middle School Web page: [www.opi.mt.gov/middle-school](http://www.opi.mt.gov/middle-school)

National Middle School Association: [www.nmsa.org](http://www.nmsa.org)

- \*Advocacy: <http://nmsa.org/Advocacy/tabid/52/Default.aspx>
- \*Research: <http://nmsa.org/Research/tabid/57/Default.aspx>
- \*Evidence supporting the middle school philosophy: [http://nmsa.org/portals/0/pdf/advocacy/messages/Executive\\_Summary.pdf](http://nmsa.org/portals/0/pdf/advocacy/messages/Executive_Summary.pdf)

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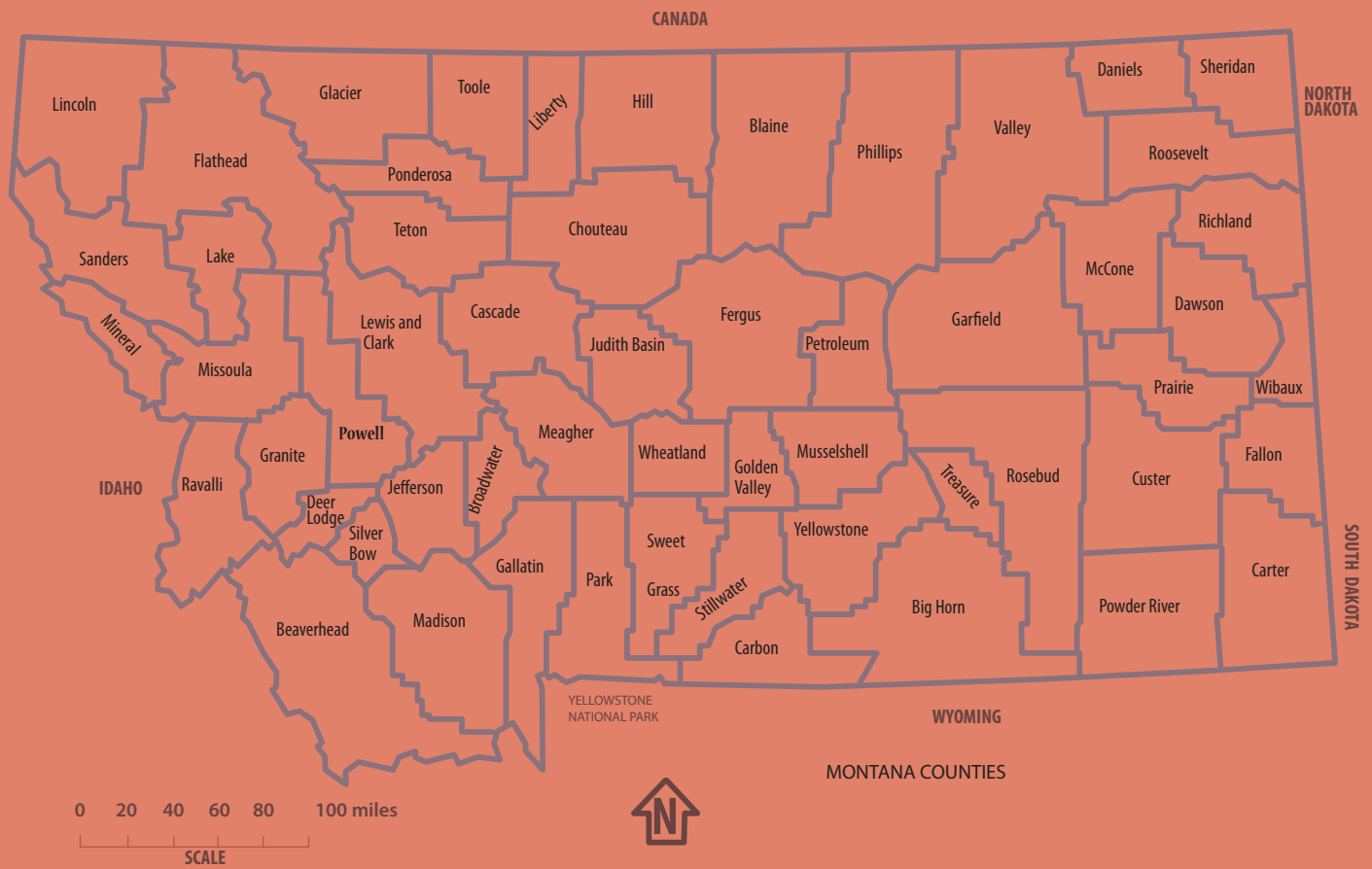
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*Cover photo: Sacajawea Middle School students*



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**IF THIS MATERIAL CONTAINS ANY MATERIAL CREATED BY SOMEONE ELSE, AND YOU HAVE NOT WRITTEN FOR AND RECEIVED PERMISSION IN WRITING FROM THE CREATOR, AND FILED THAT WRITTEN PERMISSION WITH THE RESOURCE CENTER, THIS MATERIAL CANNOT BE REPRODUCED.**

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Size: ☐ 8 1/2x11 ☐ 8 1/2x14 ☐ 11x17 ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_Weight: Standard 20 lb. (bond, cover, index) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_Color: ☐ White ☐ Color: \_\_\_\_\_

BINDERY:

☐ Collate☐ No Staple (1, 2, 3, saddle stitch)☐ No Hole Punch (1, 2, 3)☐ Pad (Red Compound, Fan-a-Part)☐ Fold☐ Cut☐ Perfect Bind (Hot Glue)☐ Comb-Bound☐ Tape Bind (Blue, Black)☐ Shrink Wrap/Quantity Per Package☐ Other**Contact the Mail Room for Delivery or Distribution of Printed Materials by Telephone: 0768**